

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4224
AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E O 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR PGOV OTRA GE WB UR PL
SUBJ: RAIL TRAVEL VIA EAST BERLIN/EST BERLIN

REFS: A) BONN 4004; B) USBERLIN 650; C) WARSAW 1397
D) STATE 47767; E) MOSCOW 3092; F) USBERLIN 0053

1. AS REGARDS REF A QUESTIONS IN PARAGRAPH 6 WE HAVE
FOLLOWING TO OFFER:

A. TRAVEL TO WSB BY CAR. THERE ARE NO SPECIAL
BERLIN PROBLEMS FOR THIS CATEGORY OF TRAVEL PROVIDED
TRAVELLERS ENTER WSB DIRECTLY FROM THE GDR, THAT IS
VIA CROSSING POINT OTHER THAN THOSE AT THE SECTOR-
SECTOR BOUNDARY, NAMELY CHECKPOINT CHHARLIE IN CASE OF US
TRAVELLERS. WE HAVE DISCOVERED ONE VARIATION TO
EMBASSY' BONN'S ASSUMPTION CONCERNING TRAVEL
BY THESE PERSONS FROM WEST BERLIN TO EAST BERLIN.
WE UNDERSTAND FROM EMBASSY BERLIN THAT A NUMBER OF
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DIPLOMATIC VISITORS TO EAST BERLIN HAVE BEEN ABLE
TO TRAVEL FREELY BETWEEN THE SECTORS USING THEIR
CARS WITH CD LICENSE PLATES AND MERELY SHOWING THEIR
DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS TO THE GUARDS AT THE EAST
GERMAN CHECKPOINT. APPARENTLY EAST GERMANS PERMIT
THIS INTRA-CITY TRAVEL AS A MATTER OF COURTESY TO DIPOLMATS.

B. TRAVEL TO WSB BY TRAIN. EMBASSY BONN IS

CORRECT THAT TRAVELLERS FROM THE EAST ARRIVING AT STATIONS IN WEST BERLIN ARE STAMPED OUT OF THE GDR WITH BORDER CROSSING CARNETS MARKED "BHF FRIEDRICHSTRASSE". THESE STAMPS ARE APPLIED DURING THE 30-45 MINUTE PERIOD IT TAKES THESE INTERNATIONAL TRAINS TO TRAVEL FROM THE OSTBAHNHOF (EAST BERLIN'S MAIN STATION) TO THE ZOO BAHNHOF (WEST BERLIN'S MAIN STATION) VIA FRIEDRICHSTRASSE (STATION IN EAST BERLIN NEAREST SECTOR-SECTOR BOUNDARY. PROCEDURE REVERSED ON EASTBOUND TRAINS.

C. TRANSIT TRAIN PASSENGERS. WHEN QUESTION FIRST AROSE IN 1974-5, WE QUESTIONED BUNDESBAHN OFFICIALS ABOUT GDR BORDER STAMPING PROCEDURES WITHIN BERLIN FOR TRANSIT TRAIN PASSENGERS. THEY ASSURED US THAT TRANSIT PASSENGERS WERE NOT STAMPED OUT OF THE GDR AND BACK INTO THE GDR AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE AND GRIEBNITZSEE RESPECTIVELY. THEREUPON EMBASSY MOSCOW UNDERTOOK SEVERAL TRIPS OF THIS KIND. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO A LETTER FROM FORMER EMBASSY MOSCOW ADMIN OFFICER (WILKINSON) DATED MAY 10, 1976, PASSPORTS OF FOUR PERSONS WHO MADE TRIP ON INTERNATIONAL TRAIN TO BERLIN PRIOR TO THAT DATE RECEIVED STANDARD EAST GERMAN BORDER CARNET DESPITE FACT THEY DID NOT INTEND TO DETRAIN IN WSB. IT APPEARS FEASIBLE, IN TERMS OF SCHEDULES, TO DIS- EMBARK PASSENGERS AT THE OSTBAHNHOF AND TRANSPORT THEM BY VEHICLE TO ZOO BAHNHOF, AND VICE VERSA. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EAST/WEST EXPRESS ARRIVES EAST BERLIN AT 22:25 AND DEPARTS THE ZOO STATION IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WEST BERLIN AT 23:35, AND ON THE EASTBOUND TRIP IT ARRIVES IN WEST BERLIN AT 0745 AND DEPARTS EAST BERLIN AT 0846.

D. AS REGARDS CONSULAR/CUSTOMS PROBLEMS, WE THINK EMBASSY BONN QUESTION ANSWERS ITSELF. THE HYPOTHETICAL TEENAGE JUNKIE HAVING ENTERED BY TRAIN INTO THE EAST SECTOR WOULD HAVE CERTAINLY RECEIVED A BORDER CROSSING STAMP, THUS IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE US GOVERNMENT TO ARGUE MISSION BERLIN SHOULD HANDLE THE CASE WITH THE SOVIETS RATHER THAN EMBASSY BERLIN TAKING IT UP WITH GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY.

2. CONCERNING THE EMBASSY BONN SUGGESTION THAT MATTER BE TAKEN UP WITH THE SOVIETS, WE ARE RELUCTANT DO DO THIS. BRITISH HERE HAVE RECENTLY RAISED WITH THE SOVIETS THEIR CROSSING PROCEDURES IN AUTOMOBILES AT CHECKPOINT CHARLIE, ASKING FOR SOME RELIEF ON A PARTICULAR DOCUMENTATION PROBLEM. SOVIETS HAVE

EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH MATTER ON
CONDITION THAT BRITISH PROVIDE FULL EXPOSE OF THEIR
ACCESS PROCEDURES. AS EMBASSY IS AWARE THERE ARE
A NUMBER OF GRAY AREAS IN BERLIN TRAVEL WHICH CAN
WORK TO OUR ADVANTAGE, PROVIDED WE DO NOT RAISE
THEM DIRECTLY WITH SOVIETS OR WITH GDR FOREIGN
MINISTRY. WE DO NOT WANT TO INVITE FORMAL "NO"
ANSWERS WHEN OTHER POSSIBILITIES OF SOLVING
PROBLEM EXIST.

3. WITH REGARD TO EMBASSY SUGGESTION THAT ADDI-
TIONAL MILITARY DRIVERS BE EMPLOYED TO PROVIDE
TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN SECTORS, WE FIND THIS
IDEA ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE, BUT WE WOULD PREFER
HOLD UP ON DECIDING THIS UNTIL WE HAVE SOME
IDEA OF THE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS WE WOULD BE
EXPECTED TO HANDLE. OUR GUESS IS THAT ONE ADDI-
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TIONAL UNIFORMED DRIVER WOULD BE ENOUGH BUT WE
AWAIT FROM WARSAW AND MOSCOW SOME INDICATION OF HOW
MUCH BUSINESS WE COULD EXPECT.

4. WE ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED THAT THE IMPLICATIONS
OF PARAGRAPHS 5-A AND 11 REF A, IF CARRIED JUST A
BIT FURTHER, COULD BESTOW THE RIGHT TO GOVERNMENT-
PROVIDED TAXI AND SIGHTSEEING SERVICES TO ALL
OFFICIALS AND DEPENDENTS VISITING THE CITY EITHER
PRIVATELY OR OFFICIALLY. WE MUCH PREFER LIMITING
THE PARAMETERS OF THE ISSUE TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS CABLE.

5. FINALLY, WE AGREE WITH EMBASSY BONN THAT WE
SHOULD EXPLORE ALL ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS BEFORE WE
CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF ALTERING THE IMPORTANT
PRINCIPLES OF THE TRIPARTIE TRAVEL POLICY, AS
SUGGESTED BY DEPT. (REF D).

6. RESPONSE TO REF E WILL BE SENT SEPTTEL.

7.. USCOB CONCURS.GEORGE

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